

# Personnel Monthly

## State Personnel Department

### Want to Earn Extra Money?

WeSave is looking for additional local merchants and wants your help! As a special incentive, WeSave will pay State employees **\$20 for each local merchant** they sign up to officially join the program! Signing a merchant up for the WeSave program is really very easy – simply visit one of your favorite stores, explain the process for a merchant to join WeSave and give them a contract with your name and contact information already completed. Contracts can be downloaded from the [State Personnel website](#). To ensure that you receive credit for signing up the merchant, please also email State Personnel at [newsletter@personnel.alabama.gov](mailto:newsletter@personnel.alabama.gov), to notify the Department of the name and street address of the merchant you have registered, as well as the discount the merchant will offer. All contracts are subject to WeSave approval and must meet company guidelines. Remember, you must use PER-

SONAL time to contact merchants. **Additionally, due to the Ethics Law, the merchants must not be regulated by, or conduct business with, your State agency.** WeSave is continuously working to get national merchants signed up for the program. You can currently view some of the national participating merchants online, however, the [WeSave website](#) will soon be redesigned to allow you to view ALL national brand businesses. This will be a great benefit if you are travelling in another city or state where WeSave discounts are given. Just remember to show your Alabama WeSave card and you will receive discounts at places such as Choice Hotels and Budget Rental Cars.

Also, Circuit City has agreed to a three month trial run with WeSave so we need you to

help convince them to stay with the program! To receive a discount, simply go online to the WeSave website and click on Circuit City to purchase online or print the coupon and take it to your local Circuit City.

Don't forget to continue checking the [WeSave website](#) for new local merchants. Roly Poly, Nobles, Jerry Higgins Tire and Auto, Madison Avenue Car Wash and Village Coffee are some of the exciting recent additions! Also, the hours to win daily GIVEAWAYS have been changed and are now 7:00-8:00 a.m., 12:00-1:00 p.m., and 7:00-8:00 p.m. Over 25 State employees have already won giveaways including \$100 gas cards, \$100 Lowes Home Improvement gift cards, and Prince Caspian packages from Walt Disney! Thank you for your help in making the WeSave employee discount program a success!



### Gas Prices Got You Down? Commute with Company!

The State Personnel Department is pleased to announce our "Commute with Company" Program that launched July 11th, 2008. We realize that many State employees drive long distances each day to and from work and we want to help you find someone with whom to share your commute. Through "Commute with Company" we will provide you with the names and contact information of other State employees who commute from the same town to the same general area each day. We hope that this will decrease traffic on the roads while increasing the money in your wallet! Due to the costs and frustrations of long

drives, we encourage you to participate in the "Commute with Company" Program.

To participate, please visit the [State Personnel Department website](#). You can complete an application on our website expressing your interest in carpooling. Once we receive your information, your name will be added to the carpool database on our website. You can then contact fellow State employees that live in your area. The database will be password protected and only those who apply will be able to view it. Your personal information, with the exception of your email address, will remain completely confidential.



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#### Special points of interest:

- **Commute with Company begins in July!**
- **State Personnel Training Schedule**
- **Donated Leave Requests: Your fellow State employees need your help!**

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## Professional Development Conference

The 2008 Professional Development Conference will be held July 29-31, 2008, at the newly renovated Lake Guntersville State Park Resort, in Guntersville, Alabama. State Secretaries and Administrative Staff will be celebrated at the event. The State of Alabama Personnel Department and The University of Alabama College of Continuing Studies will be hosting the three day event.

Nadine Ellis and Kelley Black, the Conference co-chairs, are excited about the plans and said, "The Conference committee has been hard at work to ensure that all of the conference participants have a wonderful and educational experience. We [the committee] are honored to be among one of the first conventions that will be held at Lake Guntersville State Park. Everyone on staff at the resort is going out of their way to make our conference

experience exceptional."

The opening key note speaker is Jeremiah Castille. Castille has been acknowledged for many things throughout his career. Along with being recognized as an All-American in 1982, the former defensive back for the University of Alabama holds the school record for the most interceptions in one game and the most career interceptions. Mr. Castille was inducted into the SEC Hall of Fame in 2003, the Senior Bowl Hall of Fame in 2003, and the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame in 2005. After a successful career in college football, Mr. Castille moved on to play for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers from 1983-86 and the Denver Broncos from 1987-88. Jeremiah is not only a football legend, he is also the founder of Jeremiah Castille Ministries, whose mission is to reach inner city youth and University of Alabama students

with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Presenters at the conference include Ruth Cook who will present a Grammar for Business seminar for all of the conference participants. Ms. Cook has been teaching written and oral communication skills for companies and educational institutions in Alabama for fifteen years. She believes good writing and good oral communication skills are essential to good business. She frequently develops her own workshop manuals, customizing materials to the vocabulary and needs of her individual clients. Ms. Cook is a member of the American Society for Training and Development and she served on the Board of Directors for the Alabama Writers' Forum from 1995 to 2001. She is also a member of the planning committee for the annual

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## Personnel Training Schedule—July and August 2008

The following seminars are being offered in July and August. All training offered by Personnel is free to the employee and the agency. For more information visit the State Personnel Department website at [www.personnel.state.al.us](http://www.personnel.state.al.us). To register for a class, please see your agency's training coordinator. We look forward to seeing you in class!

July 22-23: Dynamics of Supervision in Montgomery

July 28-31: Professional Development Con-

ference in Guntersville

August 5: Performance Appraisal for Supervisors in Montgomery

August 6: Progressive Discipline in Montgomery

August 12: Family and Medical Leave Act in Montgomery

August 13-14: Dynamics of Supervision in Montgomery

August 19: Employment Law for Supervisors

in Montgomery

August 26: Family and Medical Leave Act in Birmingham

August 28: Sexual Harassment Prevention in Montgomery



## \*\*Alabama Adventure Tickets Winner\*\*

Thank you to the hundreds of State employees who entered our raffle to win three Alabama Adventure tickets! Congratulations to **Deidra Bell** from the **Department of Industrial Relations** in Opelika who will be spending a fun-filled day at Alabama Adventure in Birmingham!

## Meet State Trooper Thomas Whitten

**Q:** We recently came across an article describing the heroic efforts displayed by Trooper Kent Smith and yourself in saving a man's life. Could you tell us a little about the event?

**A:** "It is lengthy, so I will try to make it short. Trooper Kent Smith and I were in route to Training and came across the Mobile Bridge and saw that it was blocked. The Mobile Police Officers on the scene advised us that there was a man standing on the bridge who was threaten-

ing to jump if law enforcement approached him, thus hanging himself with the rope tied around his neck. I advised the police that I am a negotiator trained by the FBI and would attempt to talk to the subject. The subject allowed me to approach and we began to talk. After awhile he began to quote scriptures. At that time, I asked Trooper Smith to assist since he attended Southeastern Bible College and is knowledgeable in that area. Trooper Smith was able to talk the subject into taking the rope off and shortly after we

were able to get the subject's preacher on the bridge. The subject agreed to step over the railing and let us take him to the hospital for evaluation. The subject was taken to the hospital by Trooper Smith in his Dodge Charger Trooper Vehicle, which the man had stated earlier that he liked. The negotiation took about an hour and a half from the start to the time he got in Trooper Smith's patrol car."

**Q:** What led to your job in Alabama State Government?

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## Professional Development Conference, Continued

Writing Today conference at Birmingham-Southern College.

Wednesday is a packed day with several concurrent sessions for the conference attendees to choose to attend. Managing Microsoft Outlook will be taught by David Frazier. Mr. Frazier is currently working as an IT instructor for the Department of Finance Information Services Division. He is an enthusiastic instructor who works hard to develop content material relevant to the needs of State employees.

If you want to know more about Deferred Compensation, Flex Spending and retirement, a team of experts from the State Employees' Insurance Board and Retirement Systems of Alabama will be on hand to answer your questions.

"Can't get no satisfaction?" Learn tips and techniques from Stace Bottiger on how to give and get excellent customer service. Mr. Bottiger has held a variety of customer service positions in private industry, government, and academia. He has worked in private industry as a retail sales manager and as a bank officer. He is a 20 year veteran of the U. S. Air Force as a personnel officer, executive officer, and instructor. Mr. Bottiger is also retired from the State of Alabama where

he was a personnel specialist, public information specialist and training specialist. For the 10 years preceding his retirement in June of 2005, he was the Training Supervisor for the Alabama Department of Industrial Relations. He currently works part-time as a training specialist for the State Personnel Department.



"Celebrating First-Class Professionals and First-Class Performance" is Ann Starks' topic on Thursday. Ms. Starks is a 35-year employee of the State of Alabama, 31 of those years with the Alabama Department of Education. Ms. Starks' passion is providing first-class service and first-class performance. She is a member of the International Association of

Administrative Professionals and has been recognized as Distinguished Chapter President for the State Capital Chapter. She is also a member of the National Association of Female Executives, National Association of State Boards of Education, and the Alabama PTA Board. She is currently the Executive Secretary to the Alabama State Board of Education and Coordinator of the Recognition Programs.

Jenny Nolen will be welcomed back as the closing speaker. Her topic is "Life is not a Stress Rehearsal." A very unconventional presenter, Jenny will go to any lengths to make sure her audience is relaxed, having fun and learning, including using props, singing songs, poetry and magic. Known as Alabama's Funniest Lady, Ms. Nolen has been in the national spotlight as an entertainer, speaker, and trainer for well over a quarter of a century.

The conference committee is looking forward to seeing old friends and making new ones. It is a packed three days that will leave the conference attendees refreshed and ready to bring back new ideas and perspectives to their work environments. Registration is full but we look forward to seeing everyone who has already secured a spot. We cannot wait to see you in July!

## Meet Thomas Whitten, Continued

A: "I spent 6 1/2 years in the U.S. Army and got out with no job waiting. I knew that I wanted to get into law enforcement, so I applied for numerous jobs and the State was the first to offer. I wanted to have a position that allowed me room to grow and that was also stable for my family and me."

Q: How long have you been with the State?

A: "I have been with the State for more than 10 years, about 7 1/2 years of which were with the Highway Patrol and 2 1/2 years with the Alabama Bureau of Investigation (ABI). I had a break in service for about 13 months when I left the State to work for the City of Calera. I realized that the State is where I belong and was rehired."

Q: What is your current position?

A: "I am a Special Agent with ABI. I

am currently assigned to the Cyber Crimes Unit and the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force (ICAC) and the Electronic Crimes Task Force (ECTF). I am currently assigned to the Birmingham Post and am responsible for the northern half of the State. I investigate internet crimes including child exploitation and identity theft. I have been assigned to the ICAC unit for about 8 months and am currently in training to be attached to the ECTF with the U.S. Secret Service in Hoover. I am also assigned to the Identity Theft Task Force (ITTF) with the U.S. Postal Service in Birmingham. I am currently Deputized through the U.S. Marshall as a Special Deputy, which allows me to take my investigation to the Federal Prosecutors for prosecution."

Q: What do you find are the greatest rewards from being in State service?

A: "I enjoy being able to help others

when they have no other way out, like the bridge incident. Also, it is rewarding to help others understand the dangers of the internet, especially the dangers it opens up to children, and to better prepare people to protect the children in their care. It is satisfying to be able to put individuals who endanger children in a place where, hopefully, they cannot do it again. The greatest reward from this job is having an active roll in prosecuting these people, from beginning to the end (jail!!)"

Q: Now for the important question: Alabama or Auburn?

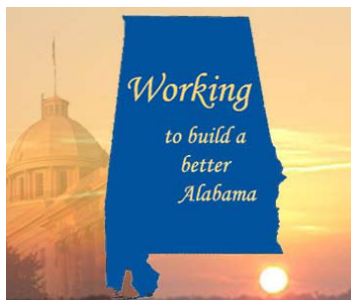
A: "Well, Alabama when they are playing against Auburn. I pull for both teams any other time. ROLL TIDE!!!!"

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Thank you Trooper Whitten for your service, your time, and your thoughtful answers!

## State Personnel Department

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The Alabama Merit System law created the Personnel Department to be administered by a Personnel Director who answers to an independent board. The Board currently consists of five members who serve staggered six-year terms. Two members are appointed by the Governor, one by the Lieutenant Governor, one by the Speaker of the House, and one member is an elected classified state employee who is subject to all merit system rules and regulations.

By law the Board is required to meet once each month. Its principal functions are to:

- \*adopt and amend rules and regulations;
- \*adopt and modify classification and pay plans;
- \*hear the appeals of employees who have been dismissed;
- \*represent the taxpayers' interest in the improvement of personnel management in the state; and
- \*advise and assist the Personnel Director.

The Personnel Department is divided into 9 major areas: Classification and Pay; Examination; Certification; Payroll and Personnel Audit; Information Technology; Training; Legal; Administrative Law Judge; and Special Projects. Please remember, the Personnel Department is here to protect the merit system and to serve as a resource for State employees and the citizens of Alabama!

The Personnel Board is scheduled to meet on July 16, 2008 at 10 a.m. in the Board Room on the 3rd Floor of the Folsom Administrative Building in Montgomery. The meeting is open to the public.

## Donated Leave Requests



To assist those who have qualified for catastrophic sick leave, State Personnel is listing the names of those state employees who are in need of donated leave. The following individuals need your help:

- ◆ Denise Abbett with Industrial Relations;
- ◆ Glenda Adams with Public Health;
- ◆ Gayle Allen with Human Resources;
- ◆ Rachel Babb with Rehabilitation Services;
- ◆ Tamala Beck with Human Resources;
- ◆ Denivora Beck with Conservation;
- ◆ Linda Blaxton with Public Safety;
- ◆ JenaAnne Campbell with Corrections;
- ◆ Winifred Cannon with Mental Health;
- ◆ Ebony Cole with Public Health
- ◆ Joni Coman with Revenue;
- ◆ Kismete Crawford with Human Resources;
- ◆ Renee DuVal with Conservation;
- ◆ Quinton Elliott with Transportation;
- ◆ Deborah Esco with Transportation;
- ◆ James Farris with Revenue;
- ◆ Mary Flowers with Human Resources;
- ◆ Clara Frost with Mental Health;
- ◆ Rachiel Fuller with Human Resources;
- ◆ Tina Fussell with Conservation;
- ◆ Jacqueline Gaines with Human Resources;
- ◆ Yoskiko Givner with Public Health;
- ◆ Mary Joan Greene with Public Health;
- ◆ Chrishuna Griffen with Human Resources;
- ◆ Jenni Guerrey with Public Health;
- ◆ Shana Harrell with Treasury;
- ◆ Angie Hartley with Human Resources;
- ◆ Mary Hatchcock with Mental Health;
- ◆ Gloria Higgins with Human Resources;
- ◆ LaDonna Jackson with Transportation;
- ◆ Larry Jackson with Corrections;
- ◆ Jessica Jackson with Children's Trust Fund;
- ◆ Kristi Jones with Conservation;
- ◆ Sonja Kennedy with Transportation;
- ◆ Kristen Lane with Human Resources;
- ◆ Bobby Lusk, Jr. with Transportation;
- ◆ Joseph Mallard with Transportation;
- ◆ Joe Marshall with Youth Services;
- ◆ Connie Martin with Rehabilitation Services;
- ◆ Joe Marvin, III with Transportation;
- ◆ Frankie McLaney with Corrections;
- ◆ Barbara Mills with Human Resources;
- ◆ Mary Mitchell with Mental Health;
- ◆ Shannon Mitchell with Public Health;
- ◆ Annie Mobley with Human Resources;
- ◆ Paula Montgomery with Education;
- ◆ Erica Moulds with Education;
- ◆ Carolyn Nelson with Public Safety;
- ◆ Tracy Parks with Human Resources;
- ◆ Jennifer Patrick with Human Resources;
- ◆ Eleanor Rene Pearson with Public Health;
- ◆ Wendy Peek with Human Resources;
- ◆ Eugene Perry with Pardons & Paroles;
- ◆ Martina Perry with Human Resources;
- ◆ Tomika Pippins with Corrections;
- ◆ Debra Pruitt with Industrial Relations;
- ◆ Martha Roberts with Public Health;
- ◆ Tamara Rogers with Transportation;
- ◆ Latoya Rollins with Mental Health;
- ◆ Bonnie Russell with Transportation;
- ◆ Phyllis Salter with Public Safety;
- ◆ Sandra Scott with Public Health;
- ◆ Virginia Scott with Mental Health;
- ◆ Tiffany Seamon with Corrections;
- ◆ Melissa Turner with Human Resources; and
- ◆ Martina Willis-McCullough with Rehabilitation Services

For more information on how to donate leave to one of these individuals, please visit the State Personnel Department website at [www.personnel.state.al.us](http://www.personnel.state.al.us). To donate your leave to a qualified employee, please visit your personnel manager and request a Form 25A or [download](#) it from the State Personnel website.